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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 001502

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SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF MAY 12 16-POINT SADR CITY CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

REF: A. BAGHDAD 1437 (NOTAL-VP ADEL ON UIA DELEGATION)
IB. 06 MAY 2008 EMBASSY O/I (ADIB ON UIA DELEGATION)
IC. BAGHDAD 1027 (BASRAH AGREEMENT)

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

I1. (S) Summary: On May 12, a committee comprised of representatives of United Iraq Alliance (UIA) and the Sadr Trend agreed upon a sixteen-point declaration as part of a larger four-day ceasefire agreement that expires May 15. The sixteen-point agreement incorporates the gist of an agreement that a UIA delegation had worked out with Quds Force Commander Qassim Soleimani and other Iranian officials during a May 1-3 visit to Tehran. While the agreement grants Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) the ability to enter and conduct lawful arrests and seizures of heavy weapons, it does not advance Prime Minister Maliki's oft-stated call for dissolution of the Jaysh al-Mehdi (JAM) militia or impose an affirmative duty upon Sadrists to turn over medium/heavy weapons. For his part, Maliki continues to maintain maximum flexibility by standing behind his artful but disingenuous claim that the agreement is between the UIA (not the GOI) and the Sadrists, and that the GOI is monitoring implementation over the deal's four-day validity period. The May 12 agreement marked the second time in the last seven weeks that Tehran has brokered a face-saving way for Iraq's largest competing Shia factions to disengage at least temporarily from a protracted GOI-led security operation that could have been extremely bloody for both sides. However, the agreement does not address the underlying economic and political factors that have led to intra-Shia conflict, thus ensuring future violence. When such violence recurs, the parties will likely once again trudge to Tehran and ask Qassim Soleimani to sort out the chaos that he has been instrumental in creating and perpetuating. End Summary.

Substance of May 12 16-Point UIA-Sadr Trend Ceasefire Agreement

I2. (U) On May 12, representatives of the joint UIA/Sadr Trend Committee agreed upon the following sixteen points as part of a larger four-day ceasefire agreement. The verbatim points are as follows:

- A cease fire to take effect as of dawn May 11, 2008 and for the duration of four days in order to achieve the following:
 - end the illegal manifestation of arms.
 - clear all explosive charges and mines in all roads by the Iraqi government, and no one has the right to object to that.
- Immediate opening of outlets to Sadr City, other than the outlet of Al Talbiyah. A minimum of one outlet shall be opened.
- Immediate resumption of the activities of institutions and directorates that ceased working in Sadr City.
- The entry of Iraqi Forces to Sadr City to practice their tasks after the end of the four days period, in order to impose State control and law and order as well as pursuing

illegal manifestations. No individual or entity has the right to interfere in the government's work whether in security, services, economy or others.

- Both parties shall continue to commit to a positive media message.

- The government shall take legal proceedings against any Army or Police member committing violations during their service, through a committee to be formed by the Prime Minister in order to receive complaints and pursue investigations.

- All political parties shall conduct their activities freely in accordance with the law.

- All arrests shall be carried out based on warrants except for those who carry arms against the State and under the supervision of Prime Minister.

- Sadr Trend shall confirm that it does not possess medium or heavy weapons. The government has the right to raid and search any location suspected of having heavy or medium weapons, in accordance with applicable laws and respect of internal affairs of the Offices of the Martyr Al Sadr (OMS) during the search.

- Prohibit the targeting, from Sadr City or other locations, of civilian locations, service and government institutions and agencies, party offices including the International Zone.

- Work on increasing investigation committees to complete Sadr City detainees' cases, in order to expedite the release of the innocents and the prosecution of the perpetrators.

- GOI is responsible for determining the number of Iraqi forces needed to impose security in the city. The government shall avoid the use of foreign forces in the event of abiding by the above points.

- The parliament committee of human rights shall pursue

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detainees' affairs in prisons.

- A committee of the Sadr Trend and UIA shall be formed to follow up with the implementation of the above points, as a guarantor of government's commitment if the Sadr Trend is committed.

- A committee of the Sadr Trend and UIA shall work on achieving the following points:

 -- Work on returning displaced Sadrists and other families to the provinces, which they have left due to the security events.

 -- Follow up on implementing the above points in Baghdad and the other governorates.

- Work on establishing a practical mechanism to compensate those who were damaged.

Substance of UIA Delegation's May 1-2 Discussions in Iran

¶3. (S) The May 12 agreement encapsulates the gist of an agreement that came out of a May 1-2 UIA delegation visit to Tehran, where they met with Iranian officials led by Qassim Soleimani to express concerns about Iran's assistance to armed fighters associated with Muqtada al-Sadr (Ref A and B).

Based upon readouts from delegation members Khalid al-Attiya, Ali al-Adib, and Tareq Abdullah, with additional information provided by VP Adel Abdel Mehdi and others, the discussions produced general agreement with Iranian officials on "principles" proposed by the Iraqi delegation. Adel and Adib told us they believed Tehran would "pressure" Muqtada al-Sadr into accepting and complying with the following "principles:"

- All armed presence in Sadr City must end.

- Sadr City must be cleared of all IEDs.

- GOI checkpoints are not meant to encircle Sadr City but to provide security.

- GOI should have full control of Sadr City.

- All political parties must be allowed to operate in Sadr City.

- All people must obey the law and violators are subject to arrest.

- No one should target the International Zone with indirect

fire.

- GOI has the right to search for and seize medium and heavy weapons.
- All non-GOI courts must be dissolved.
- No one should make public statements that escalate violence.
- Coalition Force operations, including air operations, in Sadr City should be kept at a minimum level.
- Committee of UIA and Sadrists Trend representatives will be formed to oversee implementation of principles and talk through problems before they get out of hand.

Two Agreements Mostly Similar

¶4. (C) Ahmed al-Hassani, advisor and nephew to UIA delegation member and joint UIA-Sadrists committee negotiator Ali al-Adib, told us Sadrists negotiators accepted all of the UIA's main points but argued hard to add points to increase ingress/egress to the area by Sadr City residents; to protect against repeat of alleged ISF abuses by requiring Maliki to establish a committee to look into human rights violations; and to require greater GOI focus on detainee abuse and release issues. He said the UIA relented on these issues because the overall agreement accomplished the UIA's main objective of Sadrists acknowledgment of the GOI right to enter all parts of Sadr City to impose the rule of law. VP Adel made the same point May 12 to the Ambassador (septel), noting the importance that the Sadrists are obliged to permit the Iraqi army to enter and conduct lawful operations in all parts of Sadr City. It is important to note that neither the Tehran "principles" nor the May 12 agreement call for JAM dissolution or impose an affirmative duty upon Sadrists to turn over medium/heavy weapons, both of which have been demanded by PM Maliki. For his part, Maliki continues to maintain maximum flexibility by standing behind his artful but disingenuous claim that the agreement is between the UIA (not the GOI) and the Sadrists, and that the GOI is monitoring implementation over the pact's four-day term validity period.

Comment

¶5. (C) UIA negotiator Ali al-Adib and Mohsen al-Hakim, the Tehran-based ISCI representative and son to ISCI chieftain Abdel Aziz al-Hakim, were quoted in the Iranian press as being almost effusive in expression of gratitude for Tehran's efforts to mediate the ceasefire deal. Indeed, the May 12 agreement marked the second time in the last seven weeks that

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Tehran has brokered a face-saving way for Iraq's largest competing Shia factions -- the UIA (representing the GOI) and the Sadrists Trend -- to disengage at least temporarily from a protracted GOI-led security operation that could have been extremely bloody for both sides. The late-March "Nine Point Agreement" struck between the UIA and Sadr in Tehran (Ref C) allowed Maliki to claim victory for his Basrah campaign, and permitted most of Sadr's Basrah militants to live to fight another day, with most of their heavy weaponry intact. While the May 12 agreement is off to a rocky start (continued clashes have been reported, at least one rocket was fired from Sadr City in the direction of the International Zone, and Sadrists have reportedly refused to divulge buried IED locations to the ISF), it may provide a way out of the current stalemate for the warring Shia factions, just as the Basrah agreement has done. What the agreement does not do -- or even try to do -- is address the underlying economic and political factors that have led to intra-Shia conflict: widespread unemployment and resentment among the urban Shia underclass; a perception that the ISF is a uniformed militia of the Shia establishment; an embattled government that is reluctant to grant its opponents any measure of legitimacy; and an abundance of armed groups who consistently demonstrate a casual willingness to resort to violence. The apparent

unwillingness or inability of the competing groups to address those issues ensures that further internecine Shia bloodshed is all but inevitable. When such violence occurs, it seems likely that the parties will again trudge to Tehran and ask Qassim Soleimani to sort out the chaos that he has been instrumental in creating and perpetuating.

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